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PAGE 01 MEXICO 11287 01 OF 03 072002Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01 FBIE-00 INSE-00

TRSE-00 EB-07 COME-00 /073 W

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MX, US

SUBJECT: PRESS CRITICISM OF U.S. AND GOM POLICIES ON
UNDOCUMENTED ALIEN PROBLEM

1. SUMMARY: PROCESO MAGAZINE (A POLITICAL WEEKLY
MANAGED BY JULIO SCHERER GARCIA) CARRIES PROMINENT
ARTICLE IN JULY 4 ISSUE CRITICIZING BOTH GOM AND US
GOVERNMENT POLICY WITH RESPECT TO PROBLEM OF UNDOCUMENTED
WORKERS. ARTICLE IS BASED ON INTERVIEW WITH COLEGIO DE
MEXICO PROFESSOR JORGE BUSTAMANTE. PROCESO INTERVIEW
CONCLUDES THAT PROPOSED U.S. PROGRAM ON UNDOCUMENTED
ALIENS WILL RESULT IN SOCIAL UNREST ON BOTH SIDES OF THE
BORDER, A HARDENING OF THE MEXICAN SYSTEM, NORTH AMERICAN
REPRESSION AND A "GRAVE AND SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL CON-
FLICT" BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES. WE ARE REPORTING THIS
INTERVIEW IN MORE THAN CUSTOMARY DETAIL BECAUSE OF ITS
COINCIDENCE WITH JULY 1 MEXICAN-US CONSULTATIONS HERE.

2. CRITIQUE OF ADMINISTRATION'S PROGRAM

PROCESO ARTICLE IS ENTITLED "THREAT AGAINST MEXICO;
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PAGE 02 MEXICO 11287 01 OF 03 072002Z

MASSIVE DEPORTATION OF BRACEROS". IT BEGINS BY STATING
THAT CARTER'S PROGRAM ON UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS WILL BRING
AN END TO THE FAVORABLE IMAGE WHICH THE PRESIDENT HAD
SUCCEEDED IN CREATING AMONG THOSE WHO REGARD HIM AS A
FIGHTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND WILL RESULT IN NEW AGGRESSIVE
POSITIONS TOWARD MEXICO. ACCORDING TO PROCESO, THE
PROGRAM CARTER PROPOSES CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING:

A. INCREASE IN POLICE STRENGTH OF BORDER PATROL AND IMMIGRATION SERVICE.

B. APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST EMPLOYERS WHO HIRE UNDOCUMENTED MEXICAN WORKERS.

C. AMNESTY ONLY FOR THOSE UNDOCUMENTED MEXICANS WHO CAN PROVE PERIOD OF US RESIDENCE IN EXCESS OF FIVE YEARS.

D. ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM FOR "NON-DEPORTABLE FOREIGNERS".

E. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OPERATING THROUGH INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ORGANIZATIONS.

F. INCREASE IN SENTENCES AGAINST SMUGGLERS AND THOSE WHO FALSIFY DOCUMENTS.

G. EXTENTION OF TEMPORARY VISAS PROGRAM FOR MEXICAN WORKERS.

IN BUSTAMANTE'S OPINION, STRENGTHENING BORDER PATROL WILL RESULT IN INCREASED APPREHENSION AND DEPORTATION OF MEXICAN WORKERS. HE STATES THAT SANCTIONS AGAINST EMPLOYERS IS BASED ON THE FALSE ASSUMPTION THAT MEXICAN WORKERS DISPLACE AMERICAN WORKERS, IGNORING THE REAL DEMAND THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 11287 01 OF 03 072002Z

EXISTS FOR MEXICAN LABOR AND THE FACT THAT THE SALARIES PAID TO MEXICAN WORKERS ARE FAR BELOW THOSE RECEIVED BY U.S. WORKERS. AS FOR "AMNESTY", HE DESCRIBES CONCEPT AS UNACCEPTABLE FOR MEXICO BECAUSE IT IMPLIES AN ELEMENT OF CRIMINALITY WHICH DISTORTS THE PRODUCTIVE NATURE OF THE WORK DONE BY MEXICAN WORKERS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE US ECONOMY. RATHER THAN AMNESTY, ONE SHOULD SPEAK OF AN ADJUSTMENT IN THE STATUS OF THE UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS. IN ANY CASE, BUSTAMANTE CLAIMS, STUDIES HAVE PROVEN THAT FIVE YEARS RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT WOULD ENCOMPASS LESS THAN THREE PERCENT OF MEXICAN MIGRATORY WORKERS. SUCH A MEASURE, THEREFORE, WOULD ONLY AGGRAVATE THE SITUATION AND LEAD TO SOCIAL DISORDER BECAUSE IT WOULD SIGNIFY THE MASSIVE DEPORTATION OF THOSE WHO DO NOT MEET THIS CRITERIA. AS FOR THE CONCEPT OF NON-DEPORTABLE WORKERS, THIS WOULD APPLY ONLY TO THOSE WHO CAN PROVE THREE YEARS RESIDENCE IN THE US AND WOULD LIMIT THEIR RIGHTS TO THE LABOR AREA. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE CONTEMPLATED WOULD BE USED TO PRESSURE THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT DESPITE THE GOM'S INDEPENDENT RIGHT TO SUCH ASSISTANCE. FINALLY, BUSTAMANTE SAYS, THE PROPOSAL TO INCREASE SENTENCES OF THOSE ENGAGED IN FALSIFYING DOCUMENTS, ETC., IS THE ONLY PART OF THE

PACKAGE WHICH WOULD BENEFIT BOTH COUNTRIES. THE POSSIBLE
EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY WORKER VISAS FOR MEXICANS WOULD
HAVE LITTLE IMPACT BECAUSE IT WOULD ONLY BENEFIT THREE
OR FOUR THOUSAND PERSONS.

3. ANTI-MEXICAN PRESS CAMPAIGN CHARGED

PROCESO, WITHOUT QUOTING BUSTAMANTE DIRECTLY, AFFIRMS THAT
THE CARTER PROPOSALS WERE PROCEEDED BY AN EXTENSIVE US
PRESS AND MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST "ALL THAT APPEARS
MEXICAN", CITING TERMS SUCH AS "THE SILENT INVASION",
"THE HISPANIC WAVE" OR "THE MEXICAN THREAT". ACCORDING
TO PROCESO, THIS CAMPAIGN, WHICH BEGAN ABOUT TWO YEARS
AGO, HAS CREATED AN ANTI-MEXICAN CLIMATE THAT HAS CAUSED
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PAGE 04 MEXICO 11287 01 OF 03 072002Z

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 11287 02 OF 03 072011Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
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USIA-06 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01 TRSE-00 FBIE-00
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R 071945Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 03 MEXICO 11287

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, MX, US
SUBJECT: PRESS CRITICISM OF U.S. AND GOM POLICIES ON
UNDOCUMENTED ALIEN PROBLEM

A BRUTAL REPRESSION AGAINST MIGRATORY WORKERS AND A
STRONGLY HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARD CHICANO GROUPS ALL ALONG

THE MEXICAN BORDER. INDEED, PROCESO STATES, THIS CAMPAIGN HAS EVEN CAUSED THE MEXICAN MIDDLE-CLASS ON THE BORDER TO REGARD IMMIGRANT WORKERS AS "SECOND CLASS MEXICANS". THIS ATTITUDE IS COMPLEMENTED BY THE REFUSAL ON THE PART OF "SOME MEXICAN OFFICIALS" TO ASSUME A ROLE IN FORMULATING A POLICY TOWARD THE UNDOCUMENTED WORKER ISSUE.

4. HISTORICAL PARALLELS AND ALLEGED DISTORTION OF STATISTICS

BUSTAMANTE DESCRIBES THE ADMINISTRATION'S CURRENT PROPOSALS AS A REPETITION OF THE REACTION TO THE UNDOCUMENTED WORKER QUESTION FOLLOWING THE KOREAN WAR WHEN THE USG, DURING A PERIOD OF RECESSION AND UNEMPLOY- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 11287 02 OF 03 072011Z

MENT, EMBARKED ON A SIMILAR CAMPAIGN BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF JOBS. THIS PROGRAM, HE ASSERTED, CULMINATED IN THE MASSIVE DEPORTATION OF MORE THAN ONE MILLION MEXICAN WORKERS AND, AS IN THE CURRENT SITUATION, SUCH WORKERS WERE ACCUSED OF UTILIZING HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES AND CONTRIBUTING TO CRIMINALITY IN THE US. THE CAMPAIGN IN THE 50'S DID NOT ALLEVIATE THE ECONOMIC CRISIS BUT DID SERVE AS AN "ESCAPE VALVE" FOR US SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND DISTRACTED PUBLIC OPINION LEADING TO THE CONCLUSION THAT MEXICO IS AND HAS BEEN THE "SCAPEGOAT" OF THE U.S.

IN CONTRAST TO THE 50'S, HOWEVER, BUSTAMANTE SAYS THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED DUE TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF MEXICANS LIVING IN THE US. APPLICATION OF THE CARTER PROPOSALS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT ANTI-MEXICAN CAMPAIGN COULD LEAD TO AN INTER-ETHNIC CLASH BECAUSE THERE ARE BETWEEN 11 AND 15 MILLION CHICANOS LIVING IN THE BORDER STATES. BUSTAMANTE STATES THAT THE ANTI-MEXICAN CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN BASED ON STATEMENTS MADE BY US OFFICIALS WHO CLAIM THAT THE NUMBER OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS VARIES BETWEEN THREE, FIVE AND EIGHT MILLION MEXICANS AND THAT THEY TAKE AWAY JOBS FROM US CITIZENS AND MAKE USE OF ALL TYPES OF SOCIAL SERVICES. OFFICIAL REFERENCE TO EIGHT MILLION UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS IS MADE TO COINCIDE WITH THE FIGURE OF EIGHT MILLION UNEMPLOYED IN THE US AND HAS BROUGHT ABOUT A CLAMOR TO STOP "THE SILENT INVASION" OR "THE MEXICAN THREAT"; THIS DESPITE THE FACT THAT A STUDY ORDERED BY PRESIDENT FORD CONCLUDED THAT THERE IS NO RELIABLE DATA OR STATISTICS TO QUANTIFY THE NUMBER OF "ILLEGALS". AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, BUSTAMANTE SAYS THAT US CONGRESSMEN HAVE BEGUN TO STRONGLY OPPOSE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S PROPOSALS; SPECIFICALLY APPROVAL OF AN AMNESTY, CREATION OF A STATUS FOR "NON-

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 11287 02 OF 03 072011Z

DEPORTABLE WORKERS" AND SUPPORT FOR INCREASED ENFORCEMENT AND DEPORTATION MEASURES. IN GENERAL, THE US GOVERNMENT IS APPROACHING THIS PROBLEM IN A UNILATERAL MANNER AS IF IT WERE AN INTERNAL PROBLEM WITHOUT INTERNATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS.

5. GOM INEFFICIENCY ALLEGED

BUSTAMANTE CRITICIZES THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT FOR ITS INEFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO THE CARTER PROPOSALS AND FOR TREATING THE PROBLEM AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF ITS "PACKAGE POLICY". THIS HAS LED MEXICAN OFFICIALS TO UNDER-ESTIMATE THEIR POWER TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE US, FOCUSING ON BILATERAL PROBLEMS WITH "PROVINCIAL VISION".

MEXICO, BUSTAMANTE SAYS, HAS APPROACHED THE SUBJECT OF UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS AS PART OF A PACKAGE IN ITS FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THE US; THIS, DESPITE THE FACT THAT FOR THE USG, BILATERAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE TRADE BALANCE ARE MUCH LESS IMPORTANT COMPARED TO THE IMMIGRATION CONFLICT. IN ADDITION, HE SAYS, THE "PACKAGE POLICY" HAS CAUSED THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT TO LOSE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLOIT EFFECTIVELY THE INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS IN THE US REGARDING THIS ISSUE. FOR EXAMPLE, MEXICO HAS FAILED TO RESORT TO THE LOBBYING SYSTEM WHICH IS LEGALLY ACCEPTED IN THE US AND REQUIRES A CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF THE POSITION OF US CONGRESSMEN. ALMOST ALL LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS RESORT TO SUCH LOBBYING IN ORDER TO ADVANCE THEIR INTERESTS, BUT MEXICO HAS NOT. "WE FAIL TO UNDERSTAND AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE US." DESPITE EVERYTHING, THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT PRETENDS THAT THIS APPROACH -- THAT OF PRESENTING ALL OF ITS BILATERAL PROBLEMS IN A PACKAGE -- SHOULD HAVE THE SAME VALIDITY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER.

IN CONCLUSION, BUSTAMANTE REPORTEDLY SAYS THAT IT IS
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PAGE 04 MEXICO 11287 02 OF 03 072011Z

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 11287 03 OF 03 072016Z
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INSE-00 EB-07 COME-00 /073 W
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R 071945Z JUL 77
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 03 OF 03 MEXICO 11287

PROBABLE THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEASURES PROPOSED BY CARTER WOULD RESULT IN A MASSIVE DEPORTATION OF MEXICAN WORKERS AND AN IMMEDIATE INCREASE IN MEXICAN UNEMPLOYMENT. THROUGH COMPULSION OR VOLUNTARILY, THOSE WHO RETURN AS A RESULT OF THE PROPOSED MEASURES WOULD PROBABLY REMAIN IN THE FRONTIER AREA RATHER THAN RETURN TO THEIR PLACES OF ORIGIN, THEREBY INCREASING SOCIAL PRESSURE IN THIS STRIP WHICH IS ALREADY AFFECTED BY GROWING UNEMPLOYMENT AND INTERNAL MIGRATION TOWARD THE FRONTIER AREA. INDEED, HE OBSERVES, MERE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A FALSE AMNESTY MAY WELL INCREASE THE MIGRATORY FLOW TOWARD THE BORDER AND AGGRAVATE SOCIAL UNREST. SUCH A BREAKDOWN ALONG THE BORDER WOULD LEAD TO A HARDENING OF THE SYSTEM (POLITICAL) ON THE MEXICAN SIDE AND REPRESSION ON THE US SIDE. THIS, IN TURN, WOULD BRING ABOUT A "GRAVE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT" BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES WHICH NECESSARILY WOULD HAVE NEGATIVE REPERCUSSIONS IN OTHER AREAS OF NEGOTIATIONS. THUS, BUSTAMANTE CONCLUDES, THE PROBLEM OF UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS IS MOST DELICATE AND THORNY. MOREOVER, MEXICO'S "PACKAGE POLICY" IS TRANSFORMING IT INTO ONE OF THE MOST CONTENTIOUS PROBLEMS IN MEXICO'S RELATIONS WITH THE US.

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 11287 03 OF 03 072016Z

6. COMMENT: THE BUSTAMANTE INTERVIEW IN PROCESO, WHILE HIGHLY EMOTIONAL AND SLANTED IN ITS ASSESSMENT OF BOTH USG AND GOM POLICIES TOWARD THE ILLEGAL ALIEN PROBLEM, TOUCHES A SENSITIVE, AND POSSIBLY RESPONSIVE CHORD IN THE

MEXICAN PSYCHE. NOTWITHSTANDING ITS INACCURACIES AND BIASED APPROACH, AND ITS ASSUMPTIONS THAT US IS STILL USING THE TERM "AMNESTY" AND PLANNING MASSIVE DEPORTATIONS, NEITHER OF WHICH IS CORRECT, THE PROCESO ARTICLE IS THE MOST SWEEPING PUBLIC CRITICISM TO DATE OF THE EMERGING USG PROGRAM TO COPE WITH THE ILLEGAL ALIEN PROBLEM. BY FOCUSING ON THE ADVERSE IMPACT WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROGRAM COULD HAVE ON THE FRAGILE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SITUATION IN MEXICO, THE BUSTAMANTE INTERVIEW IS OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED TO STIR UP PUBLIC OPINION ON THIS POLITICALLY SENSITIVE PROBLEM AND BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE LOPEZ PORTILLO ADMINISTRATION TO ADOPT A STRONG POSITION WITH RESPECT TO THE CURRENT PACKAGE OF PROPOSALS WHICH THE CABINET LEVEL COMMITTEE HAS RECOMMENDED TO PRESIDENT CARTER. NEITHER WE (NOR PERHAPS BUSTAMANTE) IS QUITE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT IN THE ARTICLE IS PURE BUSTAMANTE AND WHAT IS PROCESO'S OWN VERSION OF WHAT WENT ON IN A THREE-HOUR INTERVIEW. WHILE PROCESO'S READERSHIP HAS PROGRESSIVELY DECLINED OVER THE EIGHT MONTHS IT HAS BEEN PUBLISHING, IT STILL HAS INFLUENCE AMONG INTELLECTUALS AND ITS TREATMENT WILL BE READ BY GOM OFFICIALS. WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY REACTION TO ITS TREATMENT THUS FAR. END COMMENT. THOMPSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, PRESS COMMENTS, MIGRATORY WORKERS, ALIENS
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Sent Date: 07-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MEXICO11287
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770241-1202
Format: TEL
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770783/aaaacude.tel
Line Count: 355
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1938918
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS CRITICISM OF U.S. AND GOM POLICIES ON UNDOCUMENTED ALIEN PROBLEM
TAGS: PFOR, ELAB, MX, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a860a66f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009